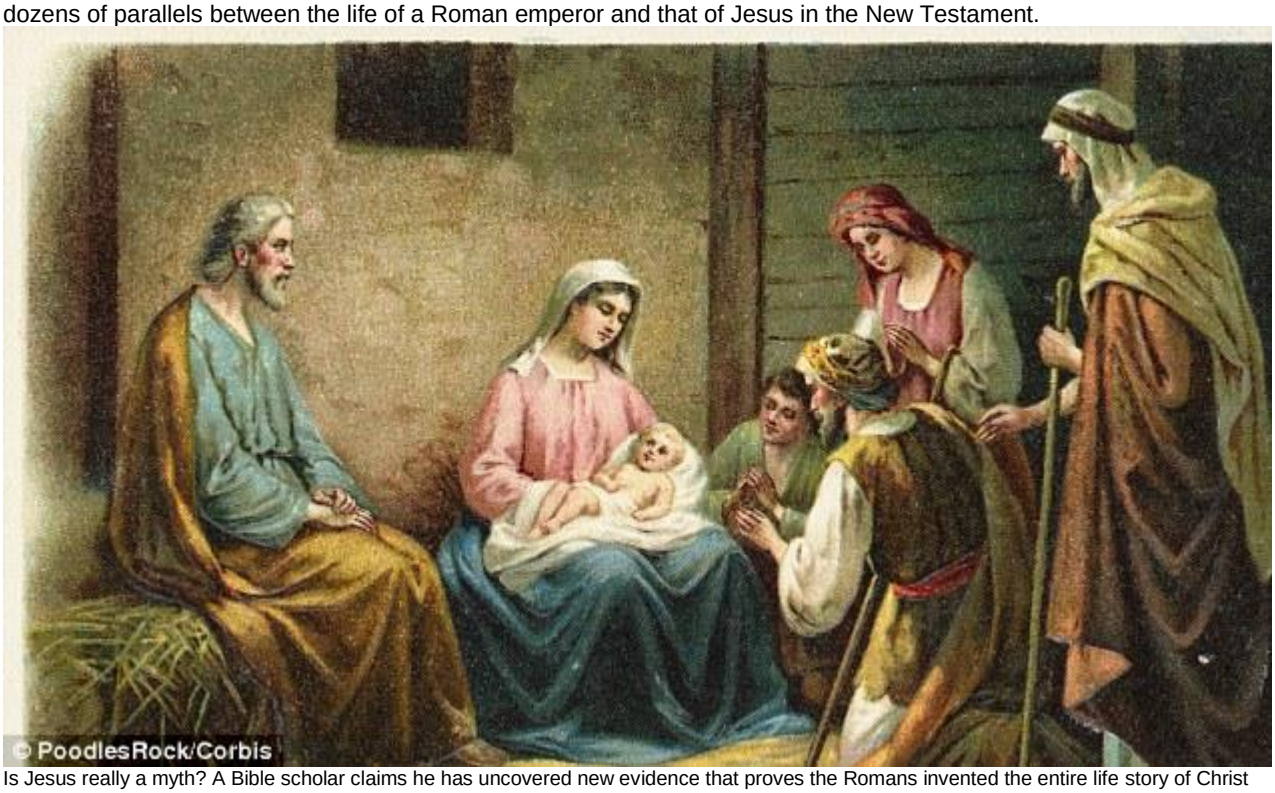
American Bible scholar claims ancient 'confessions' prove story of Jesus Christ was entirely fabricated by Roman aristocrats

- **Joseph Atwill says Romans 'used Christ as propaganda to pacify subjects'**
- **Made 'discovery' while reading only surviving account of 1st-century Judea**
- **Claims dozens of hidden parallels between Emperor TItus Flavius and Jesus**
- **He said: 'Biography of Jesus is constructed, tip to stern, on prior stories'**
- **The claims were dismissed by bible academic James Crossley, who compared Mr Atwill's work to that of author Dan Brown**

By SIMON TOMLINSON and WILLIAM TURVILL
PUBLISHED: 14:56 GMT, 9 October 2013 | **UPDATED:** 09:49 GMT, 10 October 2013

An American scholar claims to have made a controversial discovery that proves the entire story of Jesus was made up by Roman aristocrats.
Joseph Atwill asserts that Christianity did not start as a religion, but was instead created as a sophisticated propaganda tool to pacify subjects of the Roman Empire.
He says he noticed a pattern forming when he was studying the only surviving account of first-century Judea, which he claims contains dozens of parallels between the life of a Roman emperor and that of Jesus in the New Testament.



Is Jesus really a myth? A Bible scholar claims he has uncovered new evidence that proves the Romans invented the entire life story of Christ

Eureka moment: Joseph Atwill, above left, says he made his discovery while studying War Of The Jews by Josephus, which he says contains dozens of parallels between Jesus and Roman Emperor Titus Flavius

Mr Atwill argues that these ancient 'confessions' provide 'clear evidence' that the biography of Jesus is 'actually constructed, tip to stern, on prior stories, but especially on the biography of a Roman Caesar'.

Mr Atwill accepts that his theory will upset some believers but is confident that it will be accepted in good time.

More...

- Could Jesus have sat under this palm? Tree grown from 2,000-year-old seed discovered at Herod's palace blossoms for third time

- Can YOU solve this 1,200-year-old puzzle? Archaeologists ask online gamers to help piece together 3,000 pieces of stone cross

But bible academic Professor James Crossley, from the University of Sheffield, compared Mr Atwill's theory to a Dan Brown fiction book.

He told Mail Online: 'These types of theories are very common outside the academic world and are usually reserved for sensationalist literature.

'They are virtually non-existent in the academic world.'

He also suggested the theories are not taken seriously by experts.

Mr Crossley said: 'People do debate about how much we can know about Jesus, but the idea that Romans invented stories about Jesus is outside of the academic world.'

He added that this sort of theory can be 'irritating' to religion academics.

On his theory, Mr Atwill said: 'I present my work with some ambivalence as I do not want to directly cause Christians any harm, but this is important for our culture.

'Alert citizens need to know the truth about our past so we can understand how and why governments create false histories and false gods.

'They often do it to obtain a social order that is against the best interests of the common people.'

The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci: Atwill, who will be presenting his findings at a talk in London later this month, said the Romans turned to subtler ways of keeping order when heavy-handed tactics failed

Atwill, who will be presenting his findings at a talk in London later this month, said the Romans turned to subtler ways of keeping order when heavy-handed tactics failed.

He said: 'Jewish sects in Palestine at the time, who were waiting for a prophesied warrior Messiah, were a constant source of violent insurrection during the first century.
'When the Romans had exhausted conventional means of quashing rebellion, they switched to psychological warfare.
'They surmised that the way to stop the spread of zealous Jewish missionary activity was to create a competing belief system.
'That's when the "peaceful" Messiah story was invented.
'Instead of inspiring warfare, this Messiah urged turn-the-other-cheek pacifism and encouraged Jews to "give onto Caesar" and pay their taxes to Rome.'

Law and order: Scholar Joseph Atwill asserts that Christianity did not start as a religion, but was instead created as a sophisticated propaganda tool to pacify subjects of the Roman Empire

'Once those sources are all laid bare, there's simply nothing left,' he added.
He says he stumbled upon his discovery while studying War of the Jews by Josephus - the only remain first-person account of first-century Judea - alongside the New Testament.
He said: 'I started to notice a sequence of parallels between the two texts.

'What seems to have eluded many scholars is that the sequence of events and locations of Jesus ministry are more or less the same as the sequence of events and locations of the military campaign of [Emperor] Titus Flavius as described by Josephus'

Joseph Atwill

'Although it's been recognised by Christian scholars for centuries that the prophesies of Jesus appear to be fulfilled by what Josephus wrote about in the First Jewish-Roman war, I was seeing dozens more.
'What seems to have eluded many scholars is that the sequence of events and locations of Jesus ministry are more or less the same as the sequence of events and locations of the military campaign of [Emperor] Titus Flavius as described by Josephus.'
However, according to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Titus Flavius was born in 39 AD and died in 81 AD.
Estimates suggest Jesus died before 39 AD – 30 AD according to the encyclopaedia.
This was a number of years prior to Titus Flavius's military campaign.
Mr Atwill continued: 'This is clear evidence of a deliberately constructed pattern.
'The biography of Jesus is actually constructed, tip to stern, on prior stories, but especially on the biography of a Roman Caesar.'
Atwill said the clues had gone unnoticed all this time because they are coneptual or poetic.
This, he says, was designed to prevent the average believer from becoming aware of what was happening.
They did, however, want the alert reader to cotton on.

Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene by Titian: Mr Atwill accepts that his theory will upset some believers but is confident that it will be accepted in good time

He adds: 'An educated Roman in the ruling class would probably have recognised the literary game being played.'
Atwill maintains he can demonstrate that 'the Roman Caesars left us a kind of puzzle literature that was meant to be solved by future generations, and that the solution to that puzzle is "We invented Jesus Christ and we're proud of it".'
Atwill does not believe that this is the end of Christianity, but hopes his work will give half-believers a reason to 'make a clean break'.
'We've got the evidence now to show exactly where the story of Jesus came from,' he says.

JESUS, TITUS AND THE REVOLT

Roman general Pompey conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC.
Estimates suggest Jesus was born between 6-4 BC, and died around 30 AD.
Roman emperor Titus Flavius was born in 39 AD and died in 81 AD.
The first Jewish revolt occurred between 66-70 AD, the first in a long series of clashes up until 135 AD.

'Although Christianity can be a comfort to some, it can also be very damaging and repressive, an insidious form of mind control that has led to blind acceptance of serfdom, poverty, and war throughout history.
'To this day, especially in the United States, it is used to create support for war in the Middle East.'
Atwill will be giving a presentation on his findings entitled Covert Messiah at Conway Hall in Holborn, London, on October 19, where he is encouraging sceptics to challenge his theory, according to a release published on **PRWeb**.

Read more: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2451087/American-Bible-scholar-claims-ancient-confessions-prove-story-Jesus-Christ-entirely-fabricated-Roman-aristocrats.html#ixzz2hU0VWZls
Follow us: @MailOnline on Twitter | DailyMail on Facebook